



RESOLUTION

URGING THE MAYOR TO EXERCISE HIS EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION AUTHORITY TO CREATE A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CITY'S OCEAN SAFETY AND LIFEGUARD SERVICES PERSONNEL.

WHEREAS, the Mayor retains broad and flexible powers to effectuate an executive reorganization under Section 4-202 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973 (2017 Edition) ("Charter"), entitled "Executive Reorganization Power -"; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Charter Section 4-202: "In the interest of administrative efficiency, effectiveness and economy, the mayor, and only the mayor, may propose to the Council that the duties and functions of existing departments and agencies of the executive branch, excepting departments or agencies reporting directly to the mayor and not including semi-autonomous agencies, be changed or departments or agencies be created, combined, rearranged, renamed or eliminated."; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Emergency Services ("DES") of the City and County of Honolulu ("City") is comprised of the Emergency Medical Services Division ("EMS"), the Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division ("Ocean Safety"), and the Health Services Branch; and

WHEREAS, currently the DES has many responsibilities prescribed under Charter Section 6-603, including: being the primary provider of emergency medical care in the City; developing and providing training and educational programs related to emergency medical services and injury prevention; handling medical matters relating to public health and welfare; administration of the City's health services programs; and medical evaluations of current and prospective city employees; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Charter Section 6-603(b), Ocean Safety of the DES has the sole responsibility over approximately 198 miles of Oahu's coastline for being the primary responder to emergencies arising on the beach and in the near shore waters of the City, as well as handling ocean safety training, educational, and risk reduction programs relating to ocean safety; and

WHEREAS, Ocean Safety personnel and its lifeguards perform many public safety and service functions, including ocean rescues, emergency medical treatment, mobile patrol and responses, as well as education and prevention strategies to assist the estimated 18 million beach users on Oahu every year; and



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WHEREAS, every year, Ocean Safety makes thousands of rescues and takes tens of thousands of preventative actions to keep Honolulu residents and tourists safe by giving verbal warnings, utilizing public announcement systems, and posting warning signs on beaches; and

WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2021, EMS within the DES, had 328.5 full-time equivalent positions and the Council appropriated \$40,125,285, to EMS for salaries, current expenses, and equipment; and

WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2021, Ocean Safety within the DES, had 251 full-time equivalent positions and the Council appropriated \$17,108,547, to Ocean Safety for salaries, current expenses, and equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Hawaii State Legislature recently passed House Bill 1281, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, C.D. 1 ("HB1281"), to transfer certain duties, functions, and powers relating to emergency medical services for the island of Oahu from the State to the City; and

WHEREAS, currently the State reimburses the City for costs incurred by the City for the provision of emergency medical services, estimated to be \$49,671,411 for Fiscal Year 2022; and

WHEREAS, this reimbursement of costs incurred for the provision of emergency medical services is separate and apart from the budget and costs associated with the operations of Ocean Safety within the DES; and

WHEREAS, should HB1281 be signed into law by the Governor, the workload of the EMS Division will be significantly increased and reimbursement for costs incurred by the City for the provision of emergency medical services will be significantly reduced to just \$12,404,499 in Fiscal Year 2023 and \$7,952,249 in Fiscal Year 2024, and to \$3,500,000 for every fiscal year thereafter; and

WHEREAS, the Council has concerns regarding the projected annual shortfall of at least \$28 million starting in Fiscal Year 2023, and increasing to over \$37 million by Fiscal Year 2025 for EMS operations within the DES, as it is unclear at this point how the City will make up for this anticipated substantial loss in funding; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes it may be in the best interest of the City and in the interest of administrative efficiency, effectiveness and economy, to create a separate department for the City's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services personnel to recognize that additional workload on the EMS Division, to allow for Ocean Safety to



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have greater autonomy with respect to its budget and operations, and to ensure that the needs of the current employees of Ocean Safety are best served; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the Mayor is urged to exercise his authority to reorganize the departments within the executive branch pursuant to Charter Section 4-202, and propose the establishment of a new Department of Ocean Safety within the City, to be independent of the Department of Emergency Services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, and the Director of Emergency Services.

INTRODUCED BY:

Hidi Tsunaguchi

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

MAY 13 2021

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII
CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 21-122

Introduced: 05/13/21 By: HEIDI TSUNEYOSHI Committee: PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)

Title: URGING THE MAYOR TO EXERCISE HIS EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION AUTHORITY TO CREATE A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CITY'S OCEAN SAFETY AND LIFEGUARD SERVICES PERSONNEL.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

05/13/21	INTRO	Introduced.
05/19/21	PS	Reported out for adoption.
		CR-174
		3 AYES: FUKUNAGA, TSUNEYOSHI, TULBA
		1 NO: SAY
06/02/21	CCL	Committee report and Resolution were adopted.
		8 AYES: CORDERO, ELEFANTE*, KIA'ĀINA, SAY*, TSUNEYOSHI, TULBA, TUPOLA, WATERS
		1 ABSENT: FUKUNAGA

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.


GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK


TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER